

You Make Me Feel Nervous (With That Look In Your Eyes) by corinnemaree

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Summary:

Hopper and Joyce always sneak off during fifth and sixth period, but something throws the spanner in the works. And right before prom too.

You Make Me Feel Nervous (With That Look In Your Eyes)

Author's Note:

We all know this fic is David Harbour's fault. It happened, it's angsty and beautiful but it's here! First Jopper fic done! Have fun!

Jim leaned against Hawkin's High School, kids rushing inside for fifth period as he waited for someone else. The class of '60 was getting their prom soon, and everyone was buying into the joy of it - Hopper wasn't. He was just ready to leave and go make something of himself. Anything of himself.

Down the hall, she raced against the crowd, cheeks in a heat. Books pinned to her chest, she ignored yells from her teachers, but she was ready to skip. Her face broken into a large grin, she wondered if he'd be there. Somehow, he always beat her to their favourite spot. Her short hair bobbing at her shoulders as she raced, she pushed against the door, the cool air hitting her with her eagerness in toe.

Hopper's hand searching his person, he found the pack of camels that was running on empty. If his beat up car didn't have any packets left in the glove compartment, he may have to sneak some past his Mom again. It took her less than two minutes to round the corner, her cheeks flushed but a smile spread on her face as though happiness was her only emotion.

"So, you wanna play hooky, short stack?" Hopper said in a muffled tone, the cigarette disrupting his speech. Lighting it and taking a short puff, Joyce skipped over, snatching it from his teeth and taking her own drag.

"If you've got anymore camels with you, I'd go anywhere," she smiled as the smoke exhaled from her lips. As they both went to his car, Hopper looked in the backseat of his car, before perking up again.

"I don't know if a camel could fit in my backseat," he smirked and

Joyce rolled her eyes, poked him in the side.

“Oh shut up, Hop,” Joyce laughed before jumping to the passenger side door. The door, as always, stuck to the car. Joyce tried wrenching it back, but the patched up volkswagen beetle that he was still borrowing from his mother was a great fighter. Joyce, the tiny little thing she was, always battled with Hopper’s cars, but hated the beetle more than the impala. If Jim hadn’t of crashed it down that embankment, she wouldn’t be almost swearing at the little car.

“Stop before you break something, Joyce,” he laughed, putting his foot onto the back of the car and pulling the door handle with all his might. It finally swung open and Hopper stumbled back, almost falling back.

“If you just kept your rebellious ass out of trouble, you won’t have to save up for the millionth time,” Joyce said, throwing her books and bag into the backseat of the beetle. Hopper glided over the bonnet before going into the driver’s seat.

“Convince my mom to let me repair the impala,” he closed the door, looking over to Joyce.

“I’m not arguing with your mom again,” she scoffed. Joyce slammed the door shut, cheering when she saw the door shut tight. Hopper laughed when Joyce had a look of realisation that she may never open the door again. Starting up the car, the engine pattered out the familiar beat and rumbled as they zoomed out of the school parking lot.

With Ray Charles singing on the radio with *What’d I Say* , Joyce hummed out the lyrics as she continued to puff out smoke out the window. She watched as the smoke billowed out the window and created a streak behind them as the car tried its hardest to roar down the road. Joyce did hate this car, the strange way it never responded to her, especially when she was behind the wheel; but whenever she saw Jim hunched over behind the wheel with the crunched up brow of his - she couldn’t help but love this car.

They had done this many times, skipping class and messing up around town. It wasn’t their fault, class boring them both and

cigarettes too good to pass up. Hopper was rolling his shoulder as he tried to become more comfortable in the car. He ended up slouching in place, his legs spread wide and his shoulder lining up with the seat. Suddenly, he sees Joyce being stupid. She really couldn't help it, she felt the wind taking the smoke and the way it filled the car with absolute freshness. She leaned out of the window at first, getting further and further.

"Hey! Hey!" Jim called out after her, grabbing onto the belt line of her jeans. She put her hands on the end of the window. Joyce's hair blew past her face, whipping as the wind forced it back, yelling and howling to the town of Hawkins. Hopper laughed, watching her for brief moments, biting at his lip as he saw the glimpse of the radiant smile that captivated most of her face.

As they pulled up to red lights, Joyce suddenly panicked back into her seat. As Hopper searched for the answer for her mood, his head smacked against the roof of the car. The Chief of Police stood on the side of the road, his eyes on the pair, knowing full well they should be in school. Rubbing at his brow, he pointed at them.

"Joyce! Jim! Slow down before you kill someone!"

"Gotcha, Chief!" Hopper called out, saluting at the officer that rolled his eyes. As the Chief crossed the street and the light went green, the car rounded the corner in a slow crawl, dashing off as the Chief was out of sight. It only took them a few more minutes to get to the quarry. The abandoned body of land with the pit of murky water that lingered inside was their destination and had been for the past few years. If they couldn't - or rather, didn't want to - smoke at school, they would go to the quarry.

Joyce rolled down the window, hopping onto the frame of the door and her hands banging on the door of the car. Hopper jumped out, looking at Joyce as her chin rested on the roof. He chuckled silently, moving around the car and getting out another cigarette from his pocket.

"Give me a hand," Joyce smiled, and Jim smirked, an idea flickering in his mind.

"If you insist," he mumbled, taking hold of her waist and hoisting her up and out of the car. When she thought she was going to be let down, Hopper twirled her around, her legs kicking up in the air as he raced them down to the water's edge.

"Put me down, Hopper!" she squealed, arms wrapped around his neck, holding on for her life.

"You look like you need to cool down," he chuckled, the cigarette, unlit and hanging from his lips.

"No! Put me down!" she laughed, clinging tight to him. Chuckling, Hopper spun them back around to put Joyce back on her feet. She staggered backwards as she laughed, jumping on the hood of the car. Joyce joined, sitting back against the windshield and her feet not able to reach the end of the car's hood. Hopper, on the other hand, had his legs hanging from the car.

They talked about nothing for a while, Joyce telling Jim about school and Hopper talking about his parents, as well as his part time job at the station with his dad - Flo said he was a natural. As Joyce took the cigarette from Hopper once again, she seemed nervous to Jim - she was. Was she going to bring it up at all? It wasn't his business, or it could be. She was confused and just wanted a moment to explain.

"Spit it out already, short stack," he chuckled.

"I got asked out by Lonnie today," she said, the smoke slipping past her lips, breath shaking as she inhaled. Hopper looked away, his jaw set tight and the feeling in his chest that made his shoulder go tense.

"What did you say?" he said, clearing his throat.

"Yes," Joyce said in a small voice. She handed him back the cigarette.

"That's good," he mumbled back, taking the cigarette. "You two going to prom then?" he asked, turning back to Joyce, combing back her hair.

"I guess," she shrugged.

"That should be fun," he breathed out the smoke.

“You’re going right?” Joyce said suddenly, noticing how withdrawn he had gotten.

“With who?”

“Chrissy?”

“Carpenter?” he exclaimed, then laughed. “She’s going with her boyfriend. Jackson. Remember?” he said taking the cigarette from his lips.

“So you’re not going to prom?” she asked. Jim shrugged and shook his head. “Oh, come on, Hop! It’s going to be fun!”

“When you have a date,” Hopper scoffed.

“It’ll be fun. Don’t think of it like you need a date, it’s our last one, Hop,” she pleaded, the crinkle in her brow almost impossible to resist. He put the cigarette back into his mouth, taking a long drag and hanging his head as the smoke exhaled.

“Fine, fine,” he grumbled and Joyce gave over a hearty laugh, trying to reach for the cigarette from Hopper’s teeth. He avoided her hand, leaning further away from her, which forced Joyce onto her hands and knees and scrambling to get the cigarette which still remained in its place.

“Hey! Pass it here!” Hopper only smiled as Joyce tried to snatch the cigarette from his lips. Hopper felt that it was their last happy moment, of just being separate - to themselves - and utterly happy with one another. Joyce would later agree.

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No matter how much they wanted to spend time with each other after that day, it became almost impossible. Lonnie wanted to spend more time with Joyce, his arm around her nearly every free moment of their days at school. Jim would pass her in the hall, and she’d

want to reach out and take him with her, but Lonnie would guide them away. He said he wasn't jealous of Joyce and Hopper's friendship, but he acted far more possessive than Joyce knew him to be.

Hopper didn't care about Lonnie - he was a bit of an asshole, but so was Hopper sometimes. The only thing he cared about was Joyce, their friendship exchanged in glances that made Jim skip class for the rest of the day - or worse, he'd go to class to focus on anything else. He knew why he was feeling this way, the irrational anger and pull towards his car - the urge to yell and scream when he was given a free moment - he was losing someone he couldn't bear to be without. And he was angry she wasn't smiling with him.

Only a few days before prom, people were excited, filling the air with joy and anticipation. Hopper, on the other hand, was dreading having to dress up for a night he didn't want to go to. With his books in hand, ready to go to the fifth period, Jim walked down the hall. He was lab partners with Bob 'the brain' Newby in sixth, so he may as well go to his fifth period. When he rounded the corner, wading through students and teachers, people struggling with their lockers, Him was caught off guard. Lonnie was kissing Joyce before letting Joyce go get her books.

"Hey, Hopper. Better hurry before you fail English," Lonnie mocked. Joyce spun quickly, her hair flipping onto her shoulder, Lonnie's arms snaking around her waist. Hopper clenched tightly to his books and he immediately turned on his heels. He didn't know why, he didn't have the right to think with jealousy, but he wasn't going to let himself get mad - especially in front of Joyce. He made his way to his car and started it up before he realised what he was doing and where he was going.

Joyce raced outside, seeing the colourful little beetle trying to speed out of the school parking lot as fast as it could. She sighed, fixing up her bag on her shoulder. "Babe, why'd you run off?" Lonnie asked, his hand on the small of her back. Joyce sighed, getting tucked underneath Lonnie's arm and his kiss went to the crown of her head. The two went off for their fifth period class.

Jim didn't go far, he rounded the corner, smacking his hands against

the steering wheel and smoking until he felt like he could function normally. He wasn't that guy - he was better than this. But when the girl he was pining for was happy with someone else, he couldn't help but feel defeated. Smoking until it was barely able to fit in between his fingers, Hopper parked his car, walking back to school just in time for the switch to sixth period.

Joyce hated that entire day, how it dragged and the thought of his car dashing off lingering in her mind as she sat at the dinner table. Through her parents eyes she was just brooding over school or maybe she'd had a fight with Lonnie - but she couldn't help but remember the look on Hop's face as Lonnie teased him. The way his jaw set tight and the pained look in his eyes as he ignored everything else around him and left. How he didn't even notice that she'd gone to see him in the parking lot. And she couldn't help but think about how she thought of him.

As prom came in and Jim was forced into a black pair of suit trousers and a white slim jacket. His mother was taking photos of him in his suit, though he refused to take a proper photo for her at all. He wasn't used to pictures, but this was a night he wasn't looking forward to. Driving there, the hall was already alive with music and Hopper really contemplated not leaving his car, but if he wasn't seen at least once, then Joyce may actually come after him. She may have been nearly a foot shorter than him, but god was she frightening.

When he walked in, Hopper scanned the crowds, seeing Bob Newby dancing up a storm with his friends, not a care amongst them. It almost made Jim want to join in. Glancing over to the punch bowl that was being spiked, Hopper noticed the small groups of couples cooped up on the bleachers. Among the couples, Hopper saw her and immediately inhaled; he had never seen her as beautiful as that moment.

With a smile pinned to her lips and hair done up in curls; she never did care for putting her hair up like others, she said she liked the feeling of it as it touched her shoulders. Hopper knew that her parents were saving up for a good dress for Joyce, even asking him what he thought she'd like to wear. He was a little oblivious to it, but he gave his suggestions; apparently his suggestion of blue and big skirt was taken to heart. She looked...like a dream. Joyce spotted

Hopper after a while, immediately beaming as she took him in, crisp in a nice suit. When he suddenly turned around, heading out the doors of the gym, Joyce got to her feet.

“You wanna dance?” Lonnie asked. Joyce, pursing her lips, came up with a lie.

“I need some air. I’ll be right back. Promise,” she said, hurriedly kissing his cheek and rushing through the dance, trying not to make too much of a scene in front of Lonnie. Her dress, puffy skirt and all, touched against her shins as she walked, the thick waist that went from the bottom of her bust just finishing where her ribs ended barely gave her room to breathe - by the end of her crowded walk and dash, she really did need air.

Jim was leaning against the wall, their spot, smoking without her for the first time. His bow tie was already untied and hanging from his neck. Against the night air, the smoke created a cloud of guilt and shame; a naive boy thinking things could remain the same. So, he smoked alone, regretting his night and what he hadn’t done.

“Thought we’d agreed never to smoke here alone,” a voice startled him. Joyce smiled, watching as Hopper shook his head, flicking the edge of the cigarette to let the ash fall.

“Always gotta have a look out,” he recalled their promise. Joyce went to his side, taking the cigarette from his hand as he offered it, and the distance from before had not done Joyce justice - up close, she could have been an angel.

“What’s going on?” she asked.

“Not my thing Joyce,” he shrugged.

“I mean lately,” she asked, and Hopper swallowed hard, feeling the pang of jealousy wash through him, guilt taking over. “You’ve been avoiding me,”

“I haven’t,” he tried to defend but when Joyce scoffed, he knew he wasn’t getting away with it. “It’s just...hard,” he sighed. Joyce watched as he comb his hand through his hair, as though he was

nervous.

"What is?" she asked. Hopper dropped the cigarette to the ground, crushing it with his shoe and turning to Joyce. He couldn't help himself when he looked at her, the way the soft lights made the blue highlight her skin; radiant and gorgeous. He'd always known it, but in this light, in this moment, she was beyond what words could describe as transcendent. Joyce felt her breath shake as Hopper lifted his hand to her face, palm lightly hovering over her cheek and thumb resting on her chin. As his fingers moved below her chin, her face caught between his thumb and finger, she wondered what he was thinking and he was wanting what she did.

His thumb tracing over her chin, Hopper knew he was a goner. Leaning down, picking up her chin a little more, he kissed her with urgency. Of all the things Hopper knew, this was line he shouldn't cross - but he did with eagerness and lack of restraint. When he thought she was going to push on his chest, he found that Joyce was raised on her toes, and her hands were bound in his lapel.

She couldn't help herself; when his lips came to her in a crashing moment of want, it broke the dam that held back every ounce of feeling Joyce kept hidden away. Pulling down on his collar more, Hopper was forced to bend further as Joyce could rise. She giggled for a mere second at the absurdity of it, the difference between them staggering, but it didn't happen.

Joyce felt Hopper's hand grip into her waist, guiding her back to the wall and his hand left her to brace against the wall. There was a part of her that wanted it to stay, to remain in his hold; instead, Joyce had the control of him, pulling and breathing to her whims alone. For all of it, the kiss getting more intense, Joyce pulled her arm around his shoulder, forcing Hopper once more to hold her to him, their bodies against each other for the first time and it was everything she needed.

Hopper pulls away first. He left Joyce to stumble after him, a look of shock that had overtaken her brow. Both rubbing at their lips, realising what they had done, suddenly stepped apart from each other. It broke something inside of him to do so. Joyce felt the same angered torment of being parted, but both knew that this line was

shattered and there was no going back to sneaking cigarette between fifth and sixth period.

“I’ve gotta go,” Hopper said suddenly, breaking the guilt in Joyce and only thing remaining was wanting him back.

“Hop, wait,” she said, trying to step closer but when he didn’t look back and merely gestured over his shoulder, Joyce was stunned into stillness.

“Have a good night, Joyce,” he called out, getting into his beetle, driving off like nothing mattered to him. Before heading back inside to Lonnie and a few friends, Joyce snuck off to the bathroom, checking that she didn’t look out of sorts. Fixing up what needed to, she took a beat and went back to the music and the dancing.

Hopper sat in his car, the streets empty that night, save for his stupid beetle that hummed at a green light. He couldn’t go yet, he needed just a second to breathe, to understand what his impulsive self did in that moment. But as the guilt of that small moment came, he couldn’t help but realise one simple thing; she had kissed him back.

“Well, shit,” he said, touching at his lips and chuckling softly to himself.

Author's Note:

this was the [dress](#) that inspired Joyce's prom dress, for reference!